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FUNDAMENTALS OF SPECIFICATION WRITING

By FRANCIS W. GRANT

OF ALL the manifold functions of an architect under modern conditions it is safe to say that the one for which his education least prepares him, his temperament least fits him, the one he least enjoys and the one in which he makes the poorest showing, is specification writing. Nature does not seem to have intended that an artist should have to do with such prosaic work as mastering the legal technicalities, terms and processes incident to good specification writing, and the result is the free use of scissors and paste and little progress.

Exceptions are where prosperity permits and breadth of mind appreciates the employment of experts and specialists for this work, men of good judgment who have had experience in the field and can see both sides of a question and preferably men who do not aspire to artistic proficiency.

The writer firmly believes that the standardization of specifications should not be attempted beyond the matter of form and arrangement and that the subject matter should be expressed in the writer's own phraseology properly influenced by consideration of the fact that their appearance in court as evidence is a very probable contingency and standard only insofar as precedent has demonstrated what is specific, suit-proof language and what is not.

The discussion that follows is therefore not to be taken as an attempt to formulate a model specification for copying, but is merely intended to stimulate a contemplation of the why and wherefore of that branch of the architect's work.

The general conditions only will be discussed in this series, structural conditions being made the subject of other articles now in course of preparation.

The first step incident to the preparation of a specification is to determine its form. Legal cap paper, written with a pen on both sides of the paper, and bound at the top, was the original form. To this has succeeded legal size paper typewritten on one side, with page numbering only as a method of notation. Comparatively few architects have progressed beyond this awkward form.

When circumstances permit, specifications should be printed and bound in pamphlet form of convenient shape and size, 6 by 9 inches being recommended as particularly appropriate by reason of its convenient shelving.

Convenience of usage and filing should never be overlooked, as it contributes very materially to efficiency and, to this end, the additional expense of printing is amply justified on large work. Specifications for buildings, the cost of which exceeds, say, one hundred thousand dollars and particularly in the case of public work, should always be printed and sufficient copies issued to cover every possible contingency.

Typewritten specifications should be on letter size paper and thus capable of convenient filing flat with related correspondence. Vertical filing of correspondence has become practically universal and it is in various ways inconvenient to have two sizes of filing devices in one's office. Specifications on legal size paper cannot be filed in standard correspondence files and if folded as documents and so filed they are in an extremely awkward shape for reference.

The practice of binding certain stand-

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ard printed general conditions in an otherwise typewritten specification is not good. It tends to create the impression of "ready made" when "made to order" is expected and paid for. It does not command that degree of attention and respect on the part of the contractor that obtains when the whole specification is alike and made for the particular job in hand, and specifications commanding the respect of the contractors to whom they are particularly and primarily addressed will tend to bring about results meriting respect in about the same degree, seldom greater. Of course the legal virtue of the instrument is not affected by the incorporation therein of standard printed matter, but many a lawsuit would be avoided if the contractor could, by any inducement, be made to read every word of the specification at the time of bidding, and this he is more apt to do if the general conditions appear to have been written for his especial benefit.

Stereotyped general conditions, no matter how exalted their source, or how exactly fitted to the circumstances incident to one of the architect's previous commissions, are almost certain to be misfits in some one or more points, to the embarrassment of the architect employing them, this particularly if he be interested in the literary as well as the artistic success of his work. Some, of course, are not and to such this will not appeal.

There should be a margin of at least 2½ inches provided at the left of each sheet for titles, paragraph numbering and for binding. Titles should be kept wholly without this margin and not placed so as to lead to the impression that they are a part of the text.

Binding at the top is a survival of one of the most awkward features of the specifications of former times and is being abandoned in favor of left-hand binding by all progressive architects incidental to the adoption of letter size paper in lieu of legal size paper.

Binding should be by some such method as stapling, stitching, or pasting, as will render it impossible to remove or insert a page without such mutilation as will plainly advertise the fact. The reason for this is deemed obvious. The specification document should be capable of identification beyond question by a signature or mark on any one page or on the cover. If the specification is so bound that pages can be changed at pleasure without detection, a positive identification would be practically impossible. A document incapable of positive identification under all circumstances is in poor form for submission as evidence in court.

A source of annoyance, loss of time, and frequently an encouragement of the habit of lax attention to specified requirements is the inefficient system of notation commonly employed consisting of page numbers only and these often at the bottom of the page.

The specification should be divided into consecutively numbered paragraphs from beginning to end and if this be done and the work properly indexed accordingly, no need for page number remains.

Each paragraph should be carefully reviewed, amplified and "blue penciled" until it will stand equally well alone or in its intended relation to other paragraphs. Every possible endeavor should be made to avoid the necessity for cross reference to render any paragraph fully intelligible or complete.

The practice of subdividing the specifications into chapters, or any subdivisions whatever other than paragraphs, is to no good purpose, and particularly is it poor practice to head these chapters or parts with partial repetitions of the general conditions or even with reminders of or references to the general conditions. The general contractor needs and wants no assistance in segregating the work of the various crafts and the attempt to do this for him by a method so distinct as by forming the specifications into divisions or chapters intended to define and confine the duties and obligations of his several subcontractors, frequently leads to error or omission and is furthermore not one of the architect's functions except possibly when it is deemed necessary to split the work up into numerous separate contracts in the original letting, which procedure is not recommended.

Of course, by this it is not meant to

advise the total ignoring of the customary subdivisions representing in a general way the division among separate crafts. The work should be taken up in logical sequence (the sequence of building operations), but without committing the architect in the matter of sub-contracting by stating directly or by inference just who of the various craft sub-contractors shall do this, that and the other thing.

Specifications for a building, the contract for which is to be let under one general contract, as all contracts should be let if possible, should not state that centers are to be made by the carpenter contractor, that bearing plates are to be set by the brick mason, etc., for such segregation of functions is no proper concern of the architect. That electricians and the various piping craftsmen should not be permitted to cut structural members is, however, another matter and must be provided against.

Titles should be provided for as many paragraphs as possible and these kept wholly outside the margin of the text and in no instance made to read with and form a part of the text of the specifications.

An index by paragraphs should always be provided. This should be carefully cross-indexed so that by whatever name a subject is thought of, it can be found in the index. A mere table of contents is by no means an index. If lack of time or other circumstance prevents an alphabetical index properly cross-indexed, it is better to leave it so than to introduce a mere table of contents.

Brevity should be the constant aim of the specification writer, but never at the expense of perfect clarity. The specifications must be complete and the character of the drawings will largely determine how much must be said to make them so, for the information to be given is an absolute quantity. Leave nothing to be determined by the flexible and wholly unreliable rule of "customary practice."

That mere appearance of brevity which is secured by transferring essential provisions from the General Conditions of the specifications to other instruments is not thought by the writer to be good practice, the Standard Documents of the American Institute of Architects to the contrary notwithstanding.

Every contractual relation should be shown on the drawings or expressed in the specifications, and when once stated, either graphically or in writing, should, under no circumstances, be repeated or further explained, qualified, or discussed in the specifications or in any other instrument of the contract. There should be no such thing necessary as a separate paper called "Instructions to Bidders," and the "Bid Blank" should never be made the vehicle for specification matter of any kind whatever.

More than sufficient matter to secure beyond question a quibble-proof contract and the desired quality and quantity of material and labor is not only redundant and a debasement of the English language, but is almost sure to be prejudicial to the efficiency of the instrument.

All agreed that the ideal specification is one that is "boiled down" to the fewest words possible without the omission of any essential bit of information. The boiling-down process, however, consumes time, and specifications are frequently permitted to pass out of the architect's office more verbose and recondite than even their authors approve for mere lack of time to rewrite that which should have been treated as a rough draft only. The architect who resists the pressure applied by the owner at this critical point and insists upon sufficient time to produce a finished specification will build up better prestige for his office and may cultivate a better impression in the mind of the owner as to the reasonableness of professional charges.

Superfluous matter in the specifications tends to conflicting, and sometimes to impossible, requirements. For instance, the requirement that "all cement shall be of uniform bluish-gray color" followed by a complete schedule of the chemical properties that the same cement shall possess is superfluous and meaningless, yet might cause considerable annoyance and friction during the field education of some inspector, yet just such redundancies are common in otherwise good work.

The drawings should express every-

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thing capable of graphical representation and the specifications should not repeat what is clearly shown on the drawings. With very few exceptions, schedules of quantities and dimensions should never be written into specifications.

Eliminate all lists of materials from specifications. Drawings so incomplete that quantities and dimensions cannot be taken from them by the contractor are not ready for the specification writer and are most certainly not ready for submission to bidders. The builder alone should be held responsible for the correctness of the quantities upon which he bases his proposal to erect the building and most builders will consider it safer to recompute quantities before investing their money at the risk of the architect's accuracy in a line wholly outside his profession.

Those architects who have entered the profession as graduates from some one of the several building crafts are the ones most liable to indulge in a display of what they are proud to advertise as an intimate knowledge of the art of building by specifying the exact number of I-beams of each dimension and their length, and other similar data distinctly within the builder's province and not theirs.

If exact lists of quantities are out of place in an architect's specifications, approximate lists are still more so and no attempt whatever should be made by the architect to compute quantities for builders. Exceptions to this rule are only those where it is impossible to give the necessary information on the drawing as to the number of coats of paint, size and number of hinges, etc.

A method of procedure recommended as tending to the minimum of verbiage consistent with clearness of expression is to write the first draft with perfect freedom, then "blue pencil" and eliminate as you would a telegram, giving the benefit of doubt to the retention of words and phrases in every instance.

Every item essential to a complete knowledge of what will be required of the contractor should be included. This rule should be observed to such an extent that nothing whatever remains for the formal contract except the amount of the contract and the dates of execution and completion. When a specification is thus complete no need whatever exists for a formal separate contract instrument and the transaction may be completed by mere exchange of a proposal in unequivocal language properly dated and signed, and an acceptance similarly conditioned. In fact, such is the ideal form of building contract, the usual formal contract being nothing more or less than an instrument made use of for picking up items overlooked or neglected in the specifications.

The language employed in writing specifications should always be true to the title, i.e., specific, stating what *must* or *shall* be done and never what *may* or *should* be done. The specification writer should bear in mind that he is writing law and he must not depart from the mandatory forms of expression. Although this would seem to be self-evident, it is a fact that specifications from the best of offices are often deficient in this particular. Such are frequently not specifications at all, but mere essays on construction.

The point sought to be established by the preceding paragraph is aptly illustrated by the following excerpts from the specification for an important building, the architect for which had a national reputation and a very lucrative practice:

> " . . . and it reserves the right to waive any informality in and even to reject any and all bids. . . . Parties who are unfamiliar with this class of work, who have never done large work, who it is well known have not the necessary plant or who have done work for . . . before, but have given unnecessary trouble to . . . or parties not known to be financially responsible, parties known to be unreliable, litigious, and have been known to do poor work, all may well save themselves the trouble of figuring on this work. . . . There are bound to be many changes in the work on so large and complicated a building as this is as it goes on . . . the plans but tentatively show how many doors there will be ultimately or how many lineal feet there will be of partitions or of tile flooring, etc., . . . The architect has endeavored to make this specification perfectly clear and all-covering, and the bidders are requested to refrain from asking for further information, particularly before reading it all over. Unless very relevant no questions will be answered by the architect. The answering of all such questions entails

considerable trouble, for if the architect does answer them both question and answer must be sent to every bidder . . . with the terms of the contract. That contract is for a complete building; it is certain that many slight changes will become necessary as the work progresses. . . . In connection with this matter of changes it is hardly possible that changes will be made that may affect the time of the completion under this contract and bond. Chances are that any changes that may become necessary will be made well in advance of the time in which special material therefor may be needed . . . should the architect desire to make a change in the material or workmanship in certain rooms or details, he is not to be confronted with the statement that such work has been ordered and partly executed."

As previously stated, the language employed in specifications must be specific. To specify that certain named articles or processes "or equal" shall be used is not using specific language. Such qualifying clause as "or equal" has the effect in practice of losing to the owner the benefit of the architect's time and judgment used in first determining what should be used, for these words, reopen the subject and invite the contractor to look the market over and let the architect know if he can do better by substituting. Most contractors are quick to accept this invitation and the architect is then called upon to consider the comparative merits of the proposed substitution, and unless he can affirmatively declare that the proposed substitution is inferior, it must be permitted. The architect is without discretionary power in this matter, but is compelled to listen to the claims advanced in the interest of all proposed substitutions. Many contractors jump to the conclusion that "or equal" means that they shall determine what is equal, and in the absence of a clause distinctly reserving discretionary power in this matter to the architect, the courts will probably hold that they are, or at least will place the burden of proof to the contrary on the owner.

A case of record pertinent to this discussion is that of Camp vs. Neufelder, 95 Pacific 640, where the architect refused to admit that any other sidewalk light was equal to the one specified (he having specified that light or equal); the light specified was furnished and the court compelled the owner to pay $600 extra to reimburse the contractor for what he might have saved by substituting a light he thought equal, the merits of which the architect refused to investigate.

A method capable of application to a large extent and strongly recommended is to describe physical or chemical properties or the functions required without using trade names. Another method is to provide for the insertion in the bid blank of a list of substitutions desired to be made by the bidder, provision being made that failure to adopt such alternative proposal bars further consideration of changes in the items for which alternate was proposed.

Specifications should be responsible to local custom and conditions, both as to materials called for and as to terms employed. No attempt should be made to write specifications for distant work until after a careful investigation of this subject. What is entirely proper in the architect's home town may be the height of folly where the building is to be erected. It discredits an architect to specify fir framing lumber where nothing but spruce or hemlock is marketed for the purpose or southern pine flooring where fir flooring is exclusively used; broken stone may be an appropriate aggregate for concrete, and it may be that gravel is the only available material for the purpose. These and all similar questions should be determined before attempting to write the specifications.

Summarizing, it is recommended that specifications combine the following features:

1. Should not be a combination of printed and typewritten matter.
2. Should be printed and bound in pamphlet form if possible.
3. If typewritten, should be on letter-size paper, bound inseparably at left-hand edge.
4. Should have ample margin at left, with all titles confined to margin.
5. Notation should consist of consecutive paragraph numbers, continuing through entire specification without interruption.

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6. Should not attempt to define, limit or otherwise meddle with relations between contractor and subcontractor.

7. Should be indexed and cross-indexed in proper manner or not at all.

8. Should be as brief as the character of the drawings will permit and as extensive as the character of the drawings demand.

9. Should be rewritten at least once before issuance and every repetition and redundancy eliminated and all ambiguity cleared up.

10. Should never contain quantities or dimensions not absolutely essential to a clear understanding of the drawings.

11. Should at all times be mandatory in form of expression and never discoursive or merely permissive.

12. Should be definite, in every instance naming just what is wanted without the qualifying words "or equal."

13. Should absolutely provide against contractor's exercise of discretionary power in matter of substitutions.

14. Should be responsive to local conditions and custom and to related legislative acts.

THE LATE HERBERT BATSFORD—*By* W. GEDNEY BEATTY

IN the death of Mr. Herbert Batsford of London, who died on Sunday, January 14th, the architectural profession has suffered a material loss. Few practising architects have aided their profession or raised the standards of architectural beauty and proportion as did he. Mr. Batsford, at the time of his death, was fifty-six years old. At the age of twenty-one he had entered the architectural book business established in 1842 by his father, Bradley Thomas Batsford; till finally the entire control of the business passed into his own hands. He was a man of great energy and organizing power.

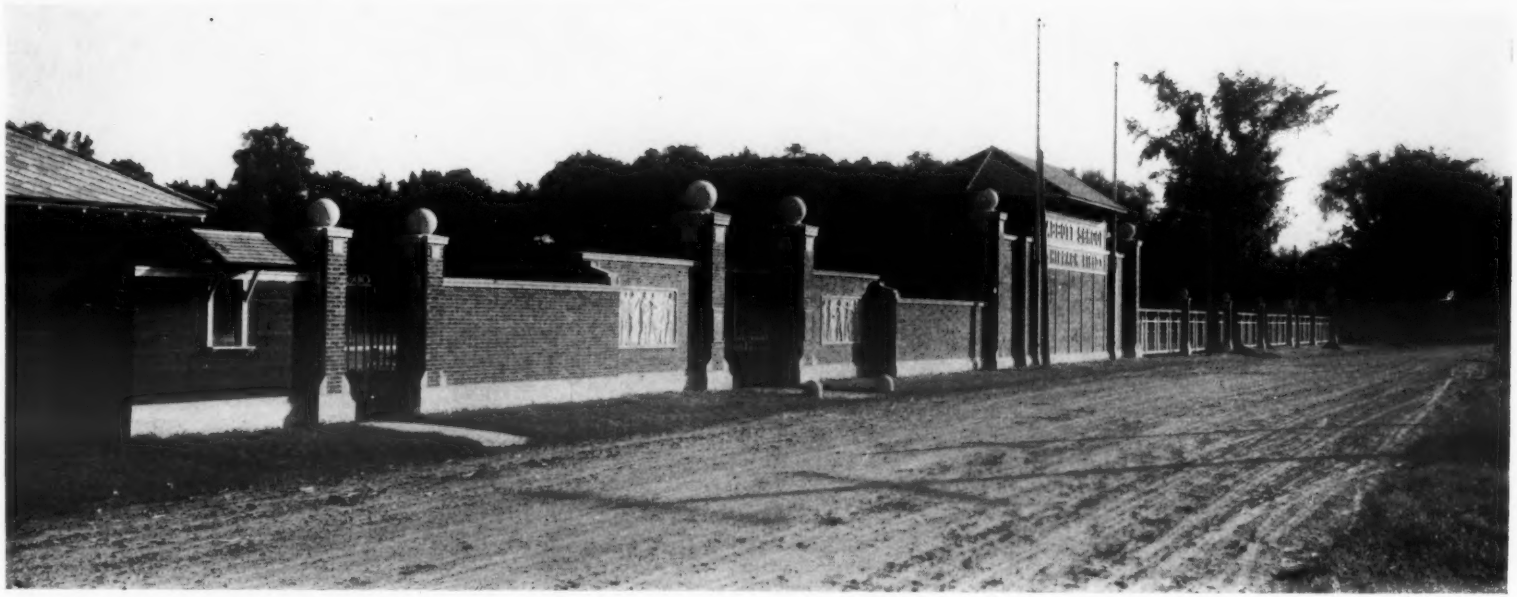
A worthy successor to such publishers as Taylor and John Weale of the eighteenth century, the firm of B. T. Batsford produced books which are to-day found in the libraries of all architects of any prominence throughout the English-speaking world.

It is a certainty that many of the buildings erected in this country show the direct influence of such books as Gotch's "Architecture of the Renaissance in England," and the two other works on English domestic architecture of an earlier and later period. Many of us will remember the book, "Old Cottages and Farm Houses in Kent and Sussex," of which many copies were sold in this country sixteen or seventeen years ago. It was a book of unexcelled quality in illustration, printing and paper, and one could not but realize that in its production something more than mere commercialism was present; and this was the aim and object of Mr. Batsford's work. The personal elements of interest and enthusiasm were apparent in every book published by his firm. The list would be a long one, and would include a series of volumes following in scope the charming one on Kent and Sussex, the six large volumes on English domestic architecture, Richardson's "English Monumental Classical Architecture," "London Churches," "Formal Gardens," "Old Colleges of Oxford," and a score of others.

Mr. Batsford would often accompany his authors on trips of research for material; and his own collection of architectural photographs, which he had gathered in the many years of his work, was a notable one, from which he drew inspiration and material. While he did not write the architectural books, many of his suggestions, given through his knowledge and experience, were included in the books as published.

To those who had the pleasure of meeting and knowing Mr. Batsford, his memory will not soon fade; for his enthusiasm on any subject discussed, combined with his deep knowledge of things architectural, was ever uppermost.

Time tends to level the influence of most of those who pass away; but few inspirations will last longer in the architectural profession than the books which Herbert Batsford produced. No better monument can be for him.



HOWARD HIPPACH MEMORIAL ATHLETIC FIELD, ABBOTT SCHOOL, FARMINGTON, ME.

MR. ARTHUR WOLTERSDORF, *ARCHITECT*

HOWARD HIPPACH MEMORIAL ATHLETIC FIELD, ABBOTT SCHOOL, FARMINGTON, ME.

MR. ARTHUR WOLTERSDORF, *ARCHITECT*

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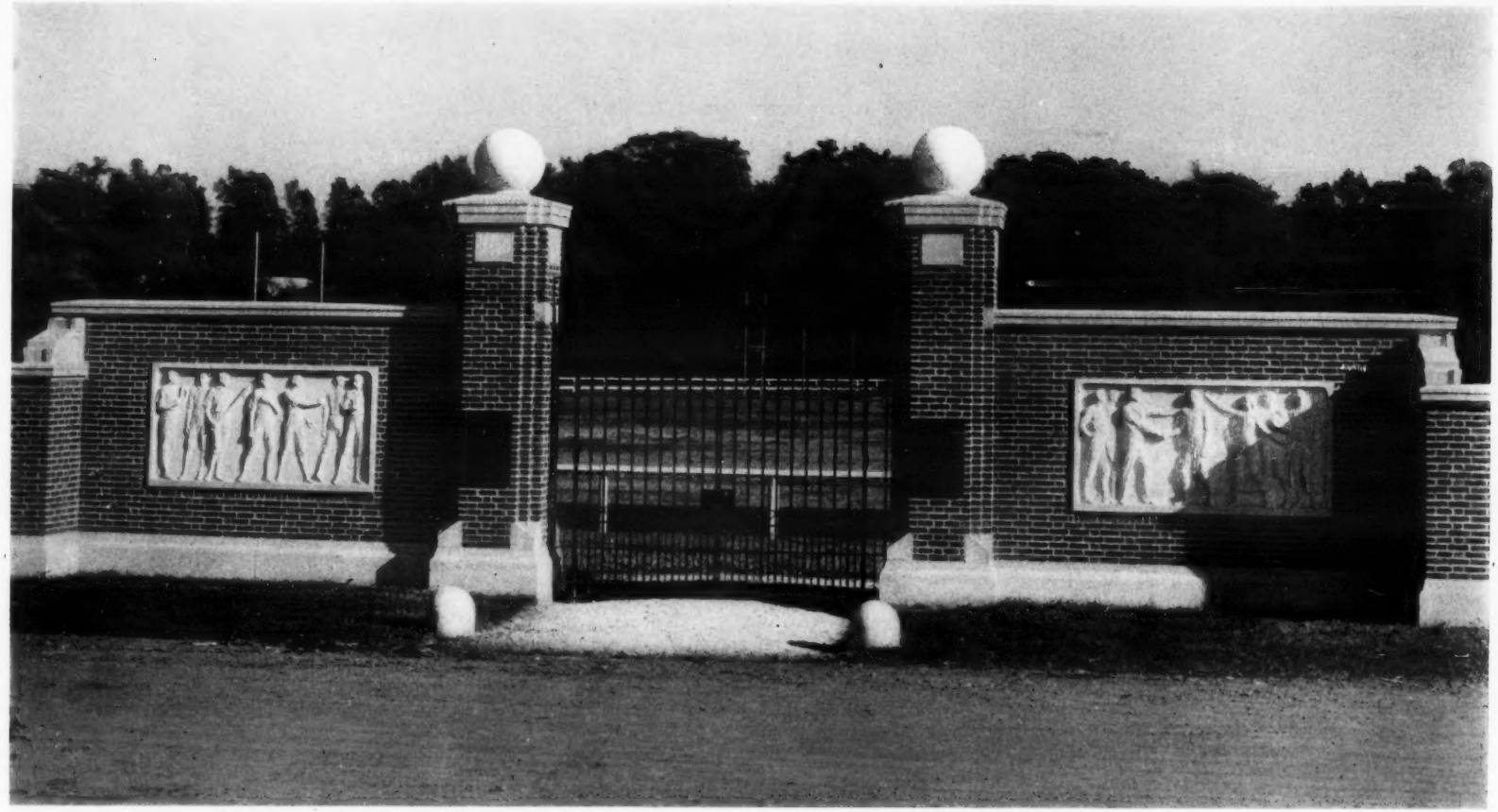

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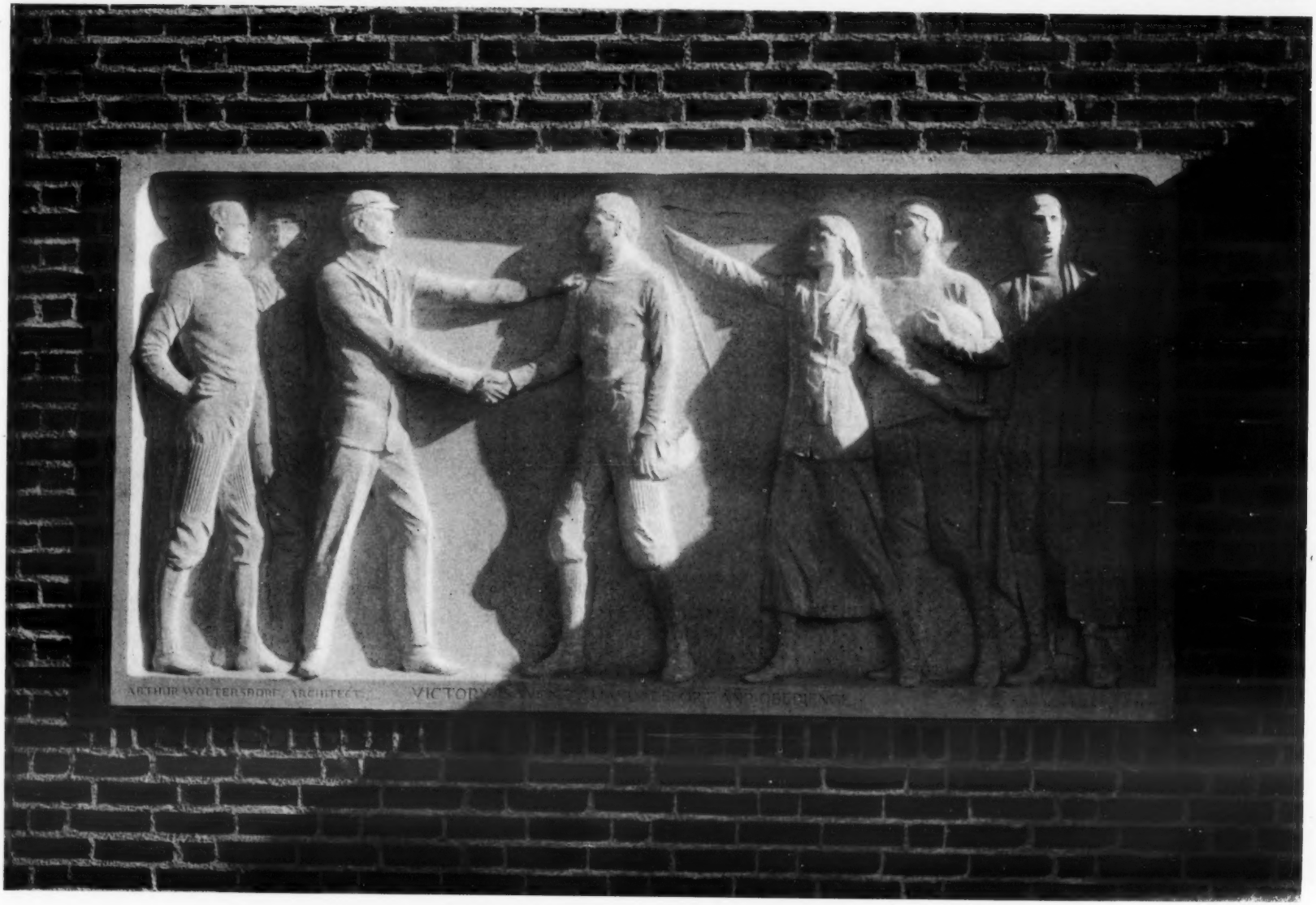
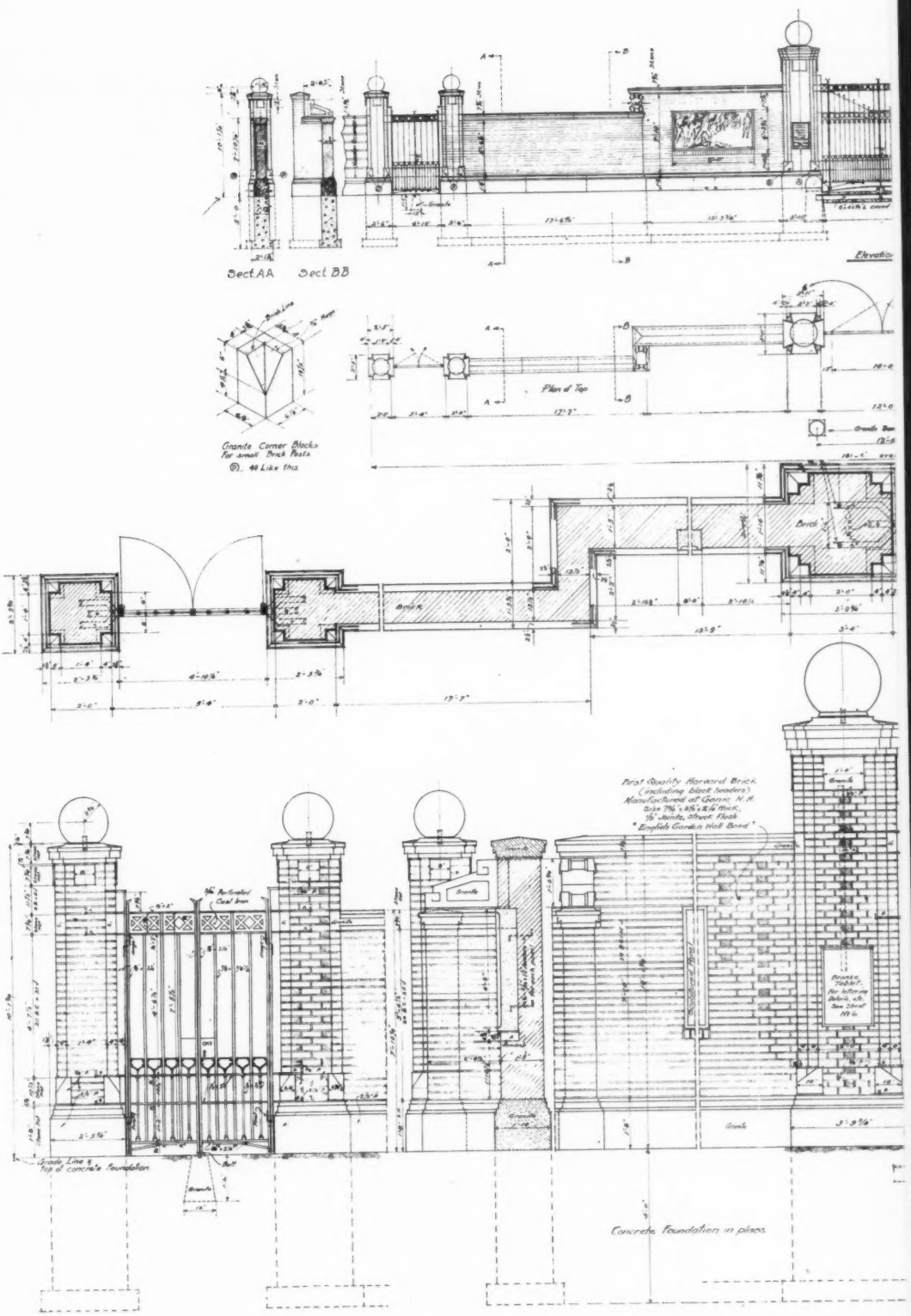


ONE OF THE PANELS FLANKING THE GATEWAY

HOWARD HIPPACH MEMORIAL ATHLETIC FIELD, ABBOTT SCHOOL, FARMINGTON, ME.

MR. ARTHUR WOLTERSDORF, *ARCHITECT*



HOWARD HIPPACH MEMORIAL ATHLETIC FI

MR. ARTHUR WOLTER

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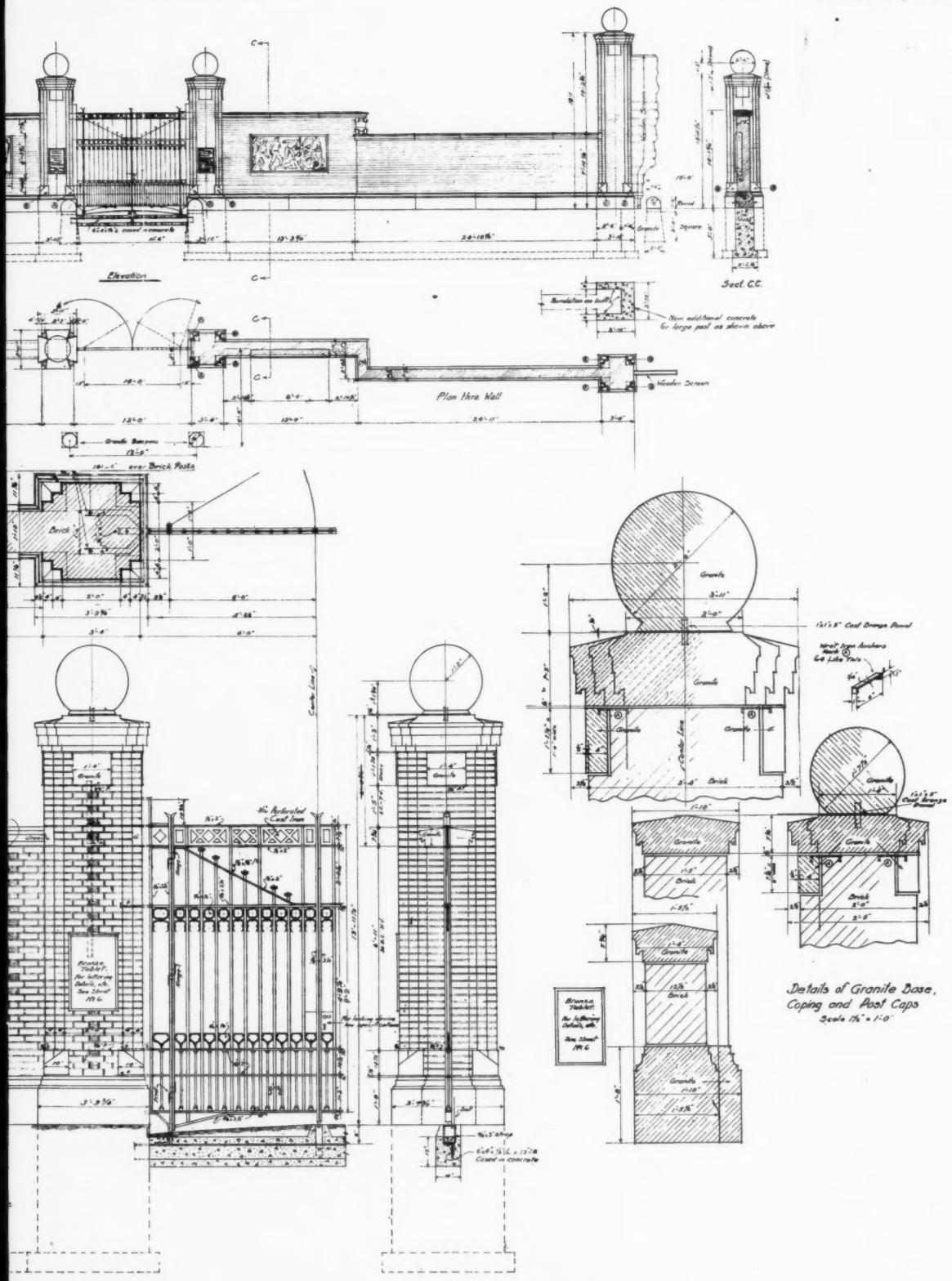

ATHLETIC FIELD, ABBOTT SCHOOL, FARMINGTON, ME.

ARTHUR WOLTERSDORF, *ARCHITECT*

Granite Base,
Post Caps
3" = 1'-0"

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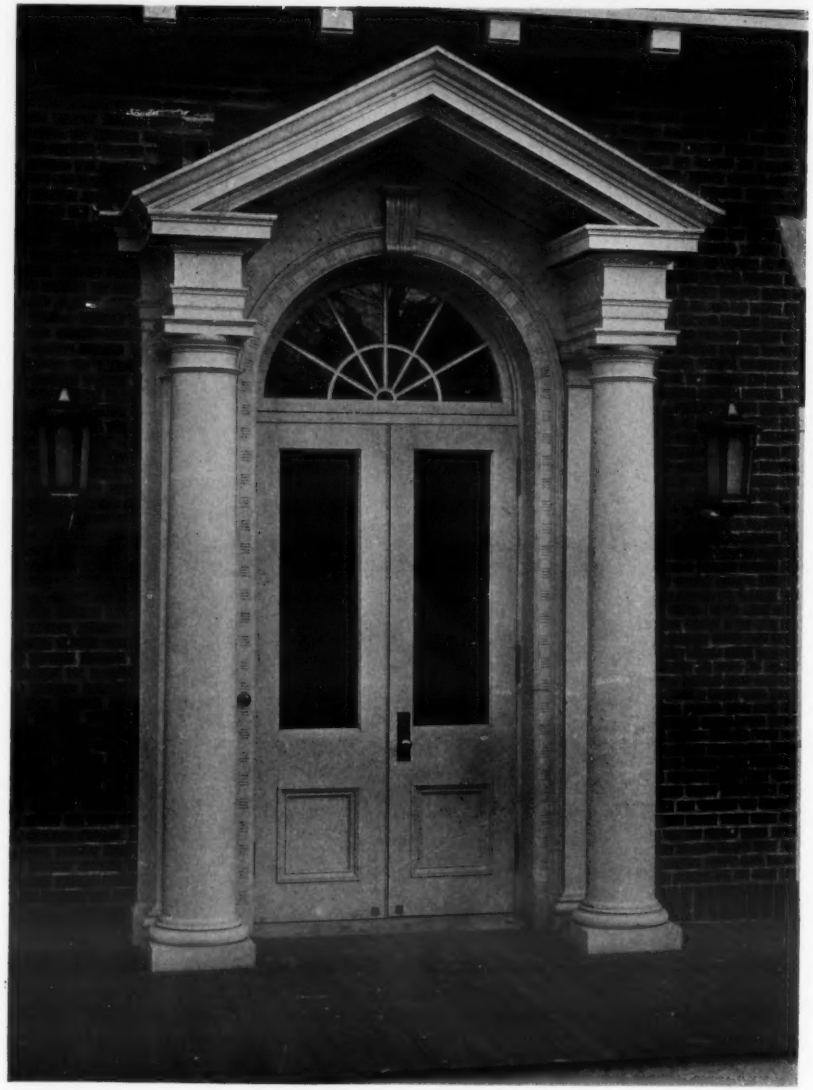
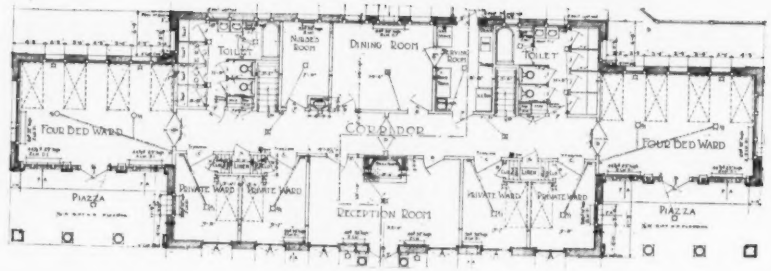
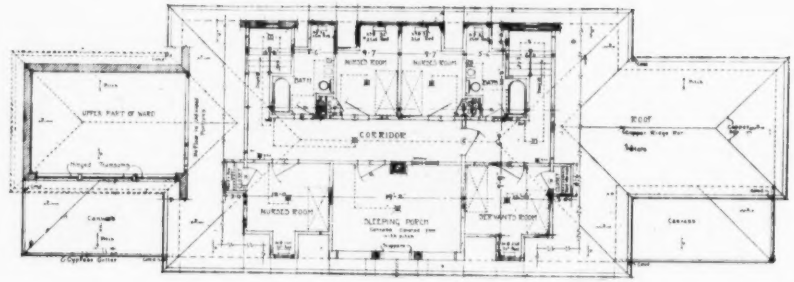
BROOKLINE TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL, BROOKLINE, MASS.

MR. HAROLD FIELD KELLOGG, *ARCHITECT*







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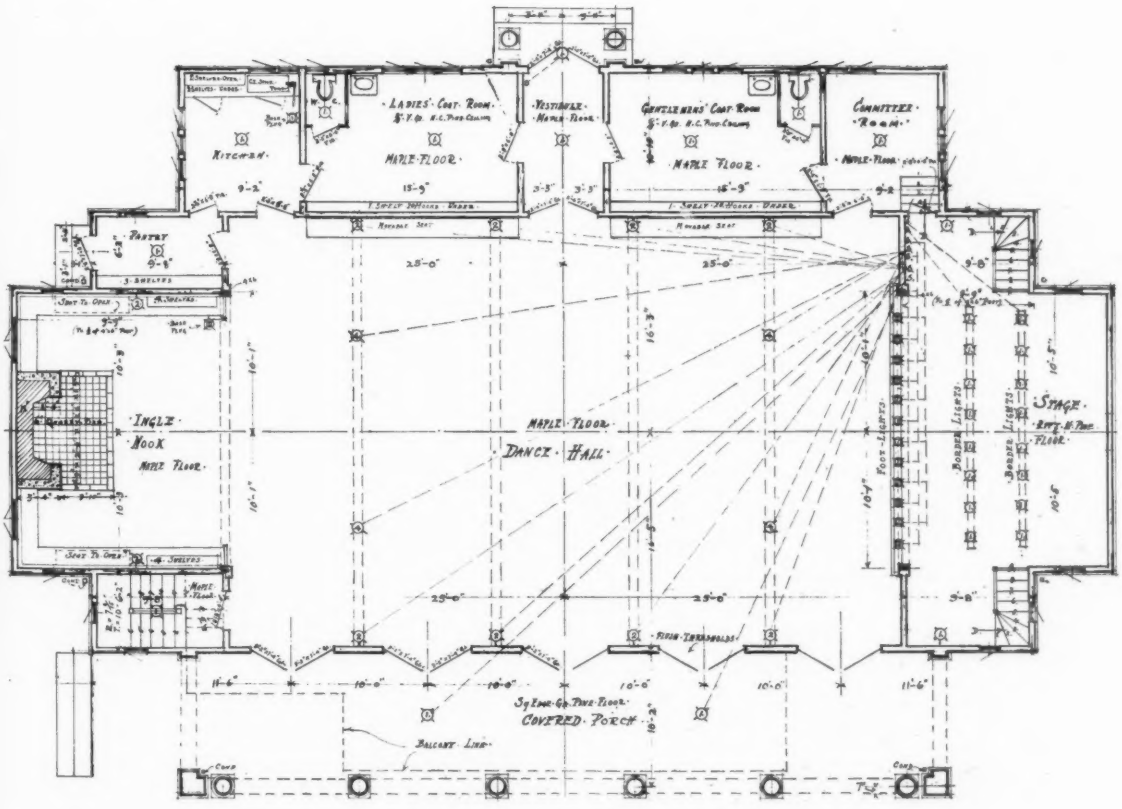
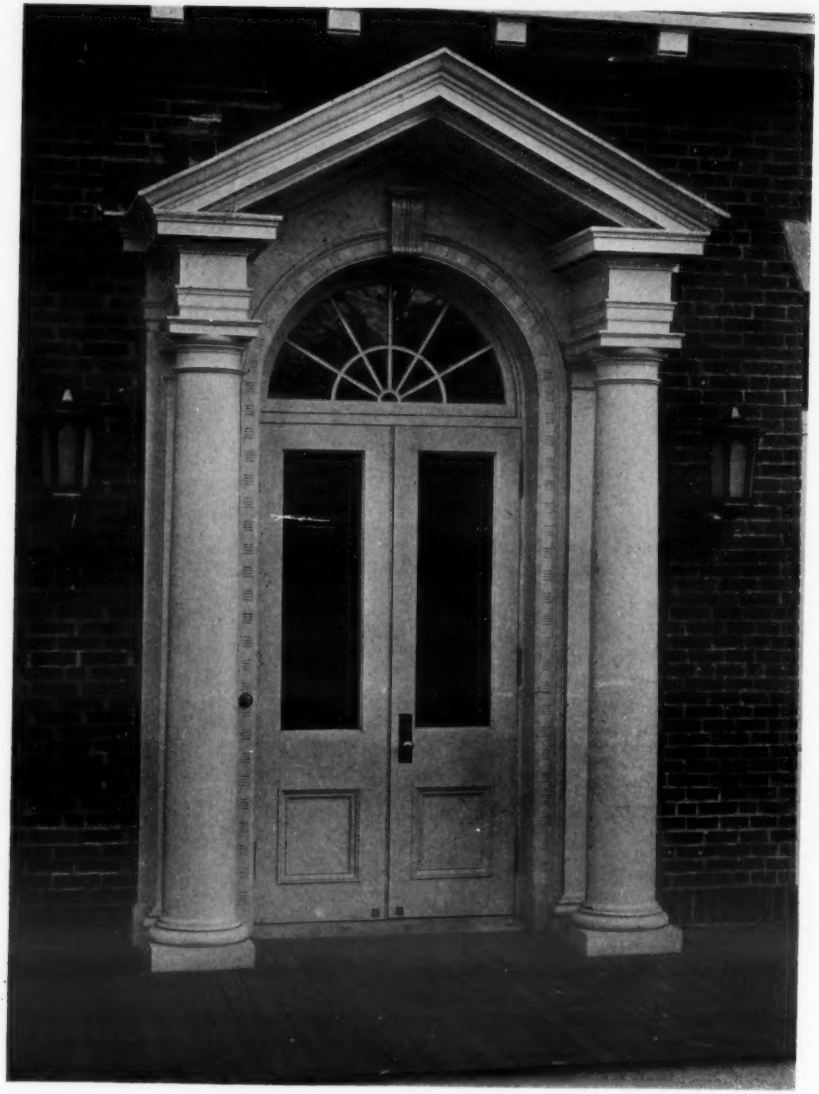
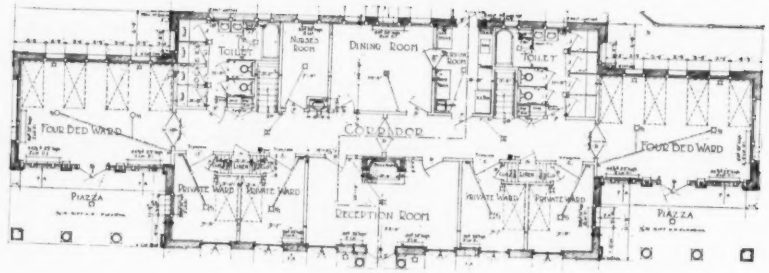
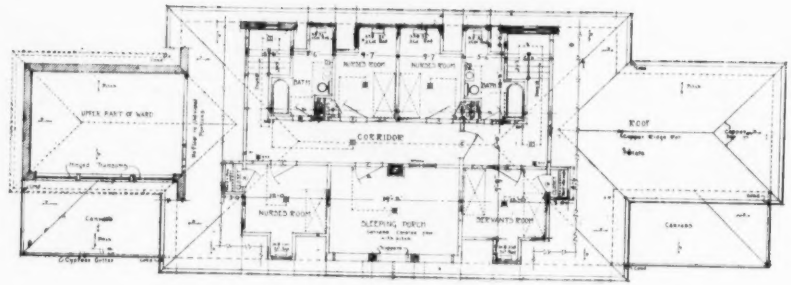


DUXBURY YACHT CLUB, DUXBURY, MASS.

MR. HAROLD FIELD KELLOGG, *ARCHITECT*

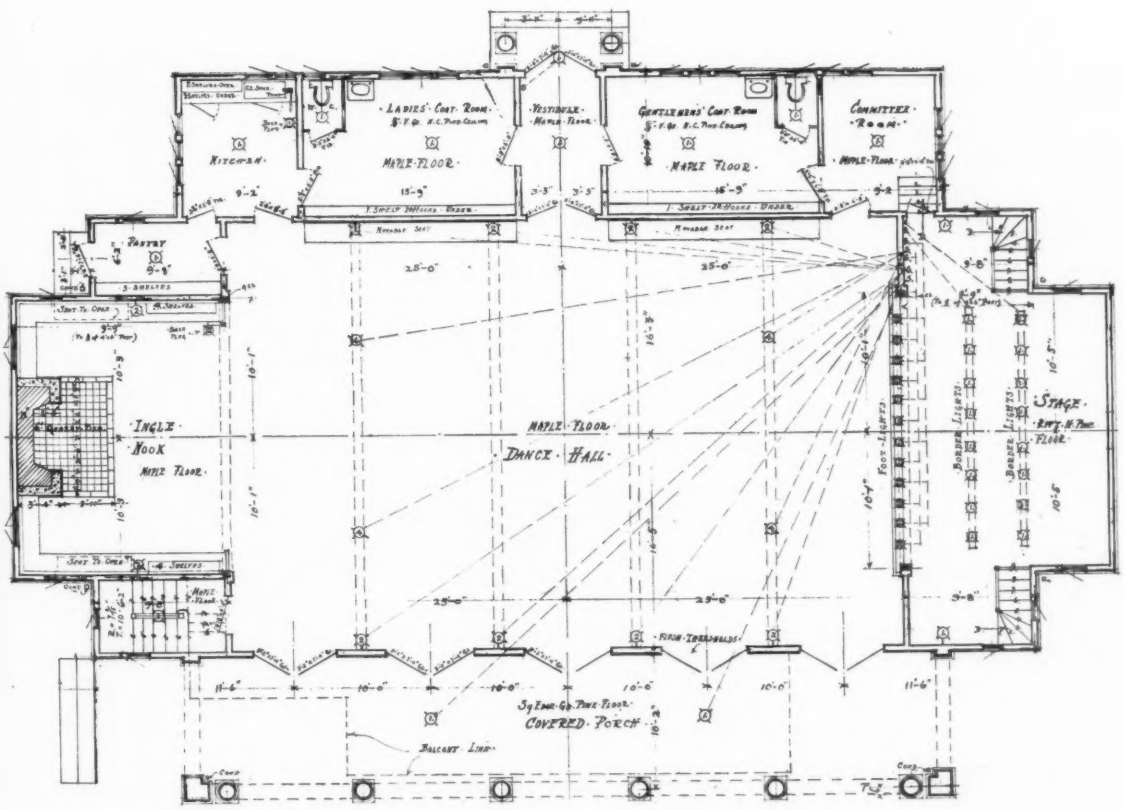






BROOKLINE TUBERCULOSIS HOSPITAL, BROOKLINE, MASS.

MR HAROLD FIELD KELLOGG, *ARCHITECT*



DUXBURY YACHT CLUB, DUXBURY, MASS.

MR. HAROLD FIELD KELLOGG, *ARCHITECT*

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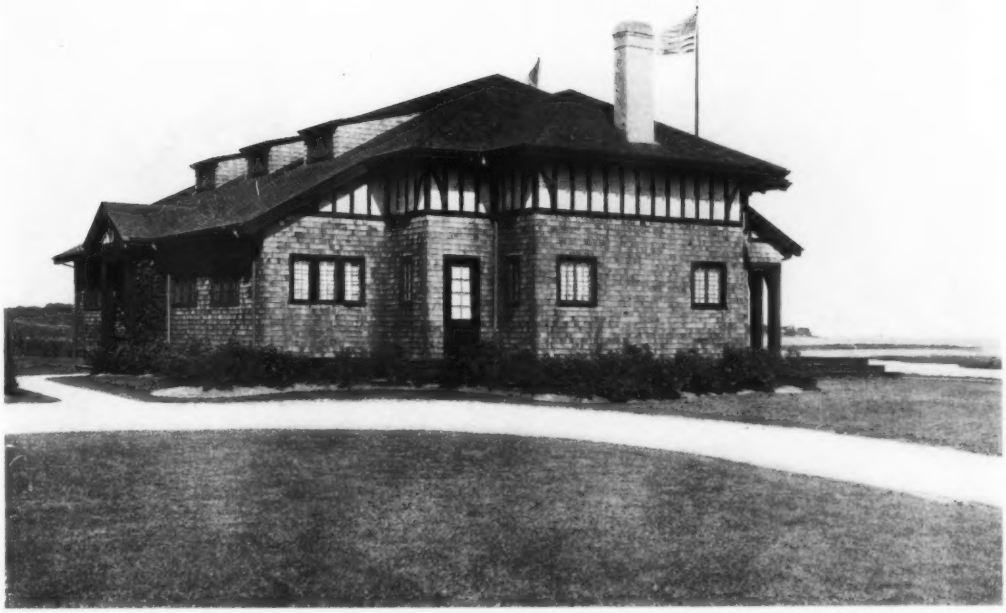

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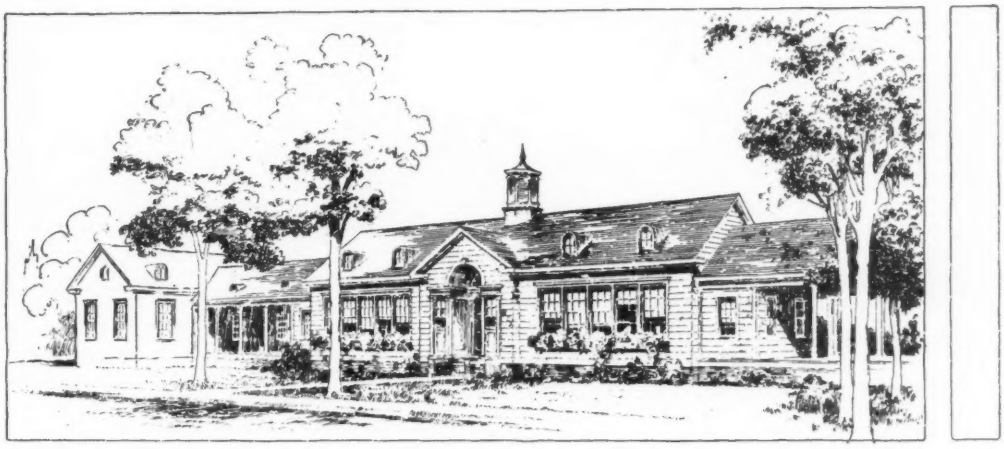
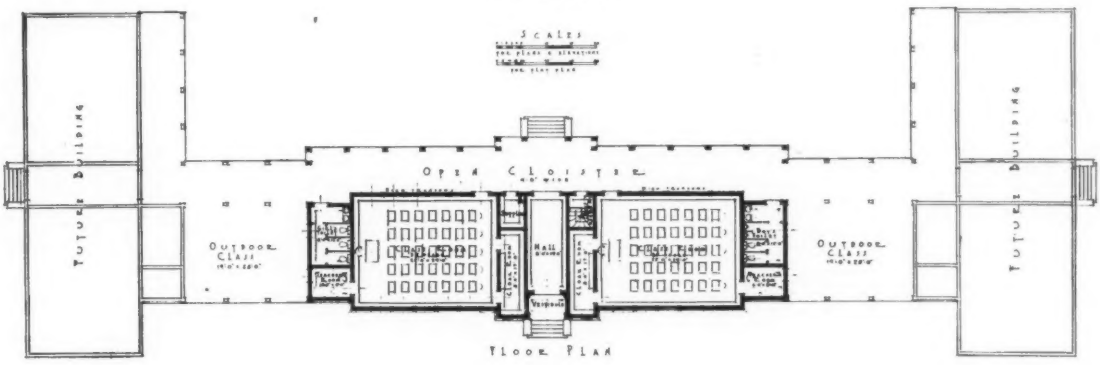
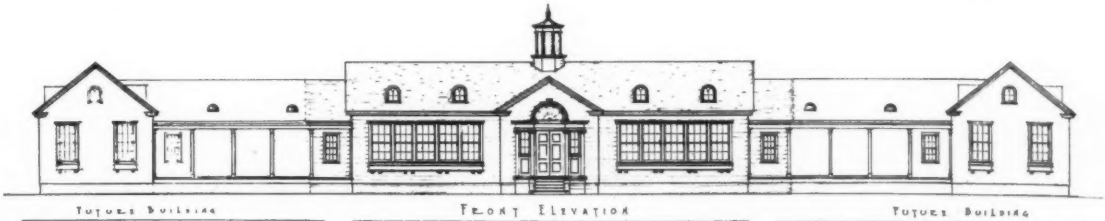


PERSPECTIVE



FLOOR PLAN



SIDE ELEVATION

PLOT PLAN

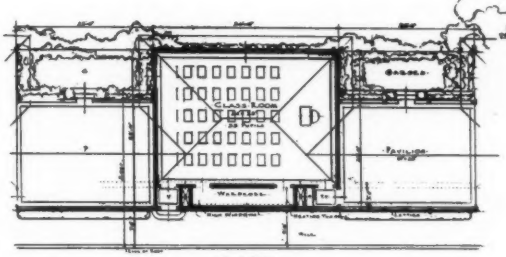
DESIGN FOR
PAVILION TYPE OF
SCHOOL HOUSE
TO BE BUILT OF
SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE

SUBMITTED BY PINE BURR.

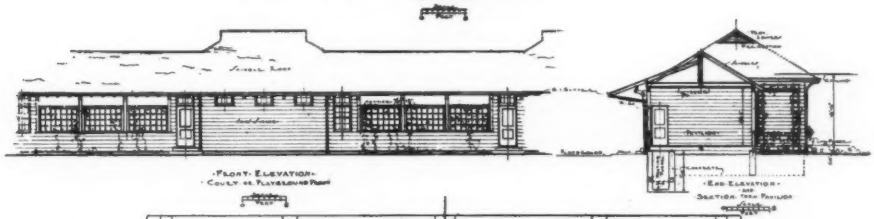
FIRST PRIZE DESIGN

SOUTHERN PINE ASSOCIATION'S COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL BUILDING

MR. NEVIL C. SETTOON, *ARCHITECT*



FLOOR PLAN

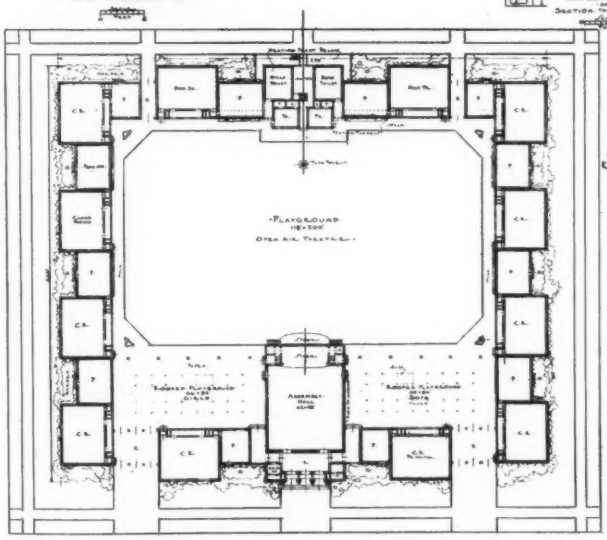


FRONT ELEVATION

END ELEVATION

NOTES

A CLASS ROOM AND ONE PAVILION CONSTITUTE ONE UNIT. UNITS TO BE BUILT AS REQUIRED AND SHOULD BE SYMMETRICALLY ARRANGED PREFERABLY ON MAIN AXIS CLOSING WITH ASSEMBLY HALL BUILT OF SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE



GROUND PLAN

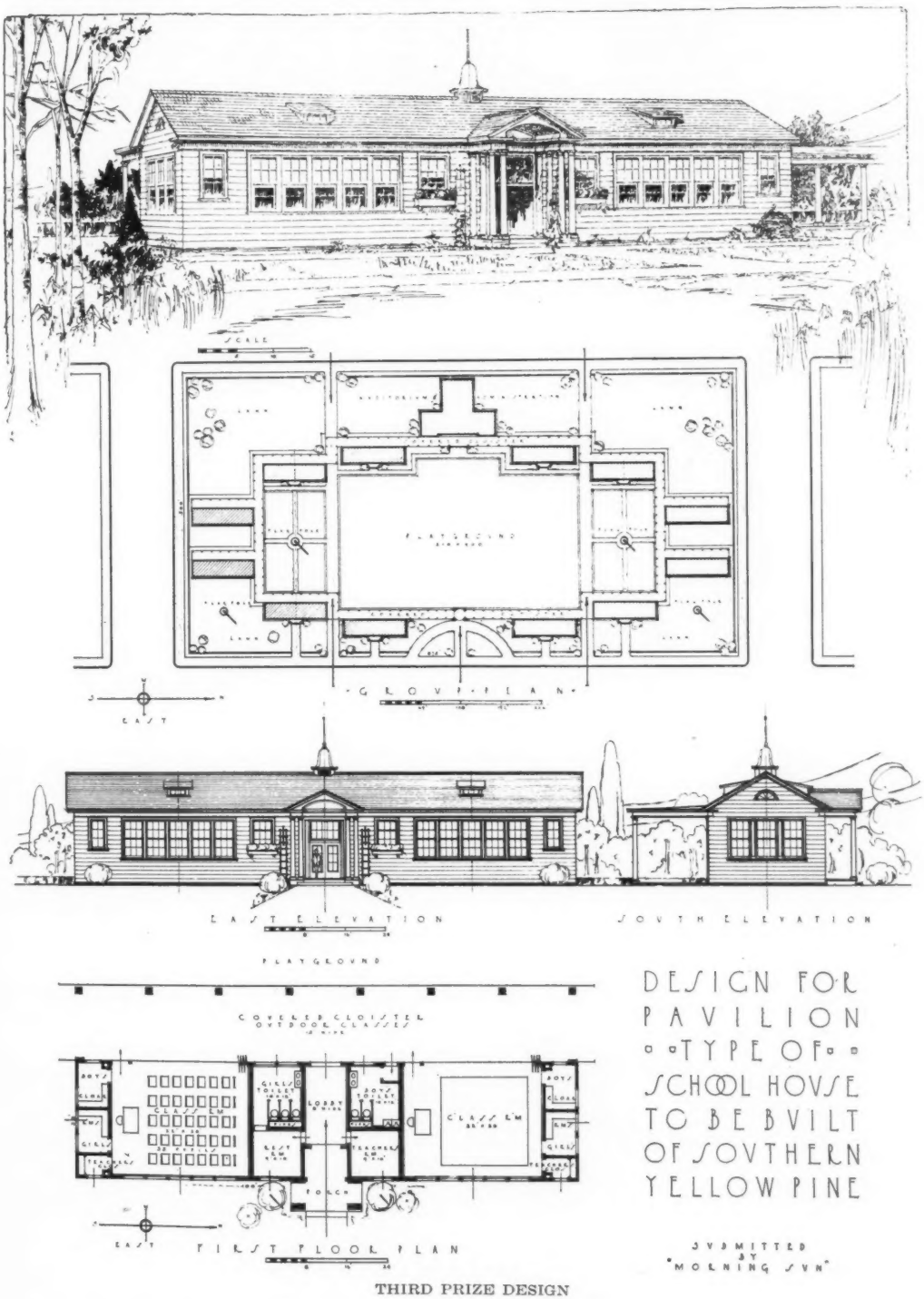
DESIGN FOR PAVILION TYPE OF SCHOOL HOUSE TO BE BUILT OF SOUTHERN YELLOW PINE

SUBMITTED BY

SECOND PRIZE DESIGN

SOUTHERN PINE ASSOCIATION'S COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL BUILDING

MR. FREDERICK G. WALKER, *ARCHITECT*



THIRD PRIZE DESIGN

SOUTHERN PINE ASSOCIATION'S COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL BUILDING

MR. CLIFFORD EVANS, *ARCHITECT*

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VOL. CXI MARCH 14, 1917 No. 2151

SPECIFICATION WRITING

CONSIDERING the great and usually unquestioned importance which attaches to the architect's specifications, it is difficult to understand the attitude of the average practitioner toward them. The work incident to the production of a specification seems to be regarded as mere drudgery, and avoided by the designer whenever possible. The result is entirely in line with what might be expected under these circumstances. In other words, it is probably no exaggeration to state that three-quarters of the specifications issued from architects' offices are inaccurate, ambiguous, incomplete, indefinite and redundant. Revision by a fully competent conscientious specification writer, who recognized specification writing as his mission and had no aspirations beyond fulfilling that mission to the best of his ability would probably result in the elimination of much useless verbiage, a clear statement of requirements, and a document that in general might be regarded as accurate, comparatively brief, yet comprehensive and direct. It is too much to expect to remold a temperament, and that would probably be necessary before the architect, who ranks as a designer of marked ability, could produce a specification possessing the qualities referred to. The obvious course to pursue, then, would seem to be for the designer to collaborate in this work with some one who is near enough to him in ability to appreciate his ideals and understand how they are to be secured through the medium of building materials, and yet who is practical and methodical enough to set down the requirements in straightforward English without equivocation or unecessary words, and at the same time omit nothing that is essential.

Undoubtedly much has been done within recent years to assist the specification writer. Men who have given this subject careful study, and who by training and temperament are fitted for this character of work, are beginning to make the results of their labors available to the profession at large. Unfortunately, the erroneous impression has heretofore prevailed in many quarters that a specification meeting the requirements of one office would prove unsuitable for another. While it is to a certain extent true that each separate piece of work demands its own description, there are so many features of building work that are the same in all cases and so much can be classified as general conditions in every specification, that a certain degree of standardization in specifications is not only feasible but highly desirable.

In another part of this issue is presented an outline of the work done by Mr. Francis W. Grant, in the preparation of a book on specifications that might well be considered a step toward this goal of standardization. We commend it to the attention of our readers generally. Probably there will be some who will not agree with all the statements made or the methods of treatment suggested, but in any event this outline seems to indicate specification practice well in advance of that in force in a great majority of offices, and for that reason deserves careful reading. It is not reasonable to believe that the slipshod methods pursued in the past will be tolerated indefinitely.

XUM

Owners are beginning to question a specification that contradicts itself on succeeding pages and leaves matters so indefinite as to obviously allow substitutions or modifications without number, and the time cannot be far distant when this doubt, if not removed, will lead to an entire loss of confidence in the architect's ability, at least as a business man. Already it is seriously questioned in some quarters, and offers the greatest argument in favor of the plan of a single contract. Unless architects will recognize the fact that the production of a worthy design regardless of its pre-eminent importance to the final result is only one of the functions of an architect, there is danger of its ultimately becoming merely the work of a department in an organization that will entirely usurp the architectural function and combine it with that of builder.

LICENSING BUILDERS

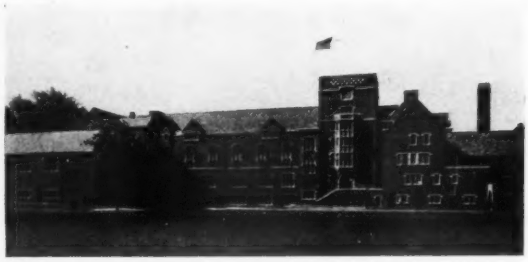
FOLLOWING the usual course of suddenly initiated or revived popular movements, the agitation for the licensing of builders which resulted from the collapse of a building in New York City some five months since, has practically subsided. Nothing tangible was accomplished and presumably there is now as much likelihood of other failures taking place due to improper methods pursued by builders as there was before the subject received the attention it commanded following the disaster referred to. As a general statement it may be said that too many safeguards cannot be placed around building operations. Already architects are subject to examination to determine their fitness before they are permitted to practise in a number of states in the Union, and others are considering the enactment of similar laws. In addition to the steps taken to insure the ability of the architects, the plans which these specially trained men prepare are usually submitted for approval to some state or municipal bureau before they can be executed. Those to whom the construction work falls, however, are illogically enough not required under present laws to give any evidence of their fitness or ability. Any one with the requisite amount of capital can engage in the building business. That the public health and safety can be endangered quite as much through faulty methods of building as through faulty design does not seem to have been realized. Inspection, however rigid, does not answer the question. It is practically impossible to supervise construction work so carefully through municipal bureaus or otherwise, that improper and inadequate methods or even defective materials cannot be used. If, on the other hand, builders were required to demonstrate their ability before being permitted to engage in construction work, and were then liable to forfeit their licenses in the case of any material deviation from recognized standards of building construction practice, found in their work, the public would be safeguarded far beyond any protection which it now enjoys. It is to be hoped that architects and reputable builders who must realize the importance of the matter more keenly than the general public will not delay action until forced into it by an aroused public following further failures. While contemplation of "what might have been" is always in a sense futile, it is undoubtedly true that if builders had been properly licensed some years ago much loss of both life and property would in all probability have been prevented, and the character of a considerable portion of our construction work done in recent years greatly improved.

THE CURRENT ARCHITECTURAL PRESS

COMMENCING with the January, 1917, issue, *The Brickbuilder* assumes a new name, *The Architectural Forum*. Reasons for this change in name are set forth in an editorial, from which we learn that development along broader lines than was possible under the former title was desired, and while architecture in materials of clay will be a feature of the *Architectural Forum*, buildings executed in other materials will also be presented.

The new zoning ordinance in New York City is the subject of a leading article, contributed by Louis Graves. The need of districting in all of our large cities is so thoroughly realized that the example set by New York will undoubtedly be

(FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL FORUM)



TAFT SCHOOL, WATERTOWN, CONN.
BERTRAM GROSVENOR GOODHUE, *ARCHITECT*

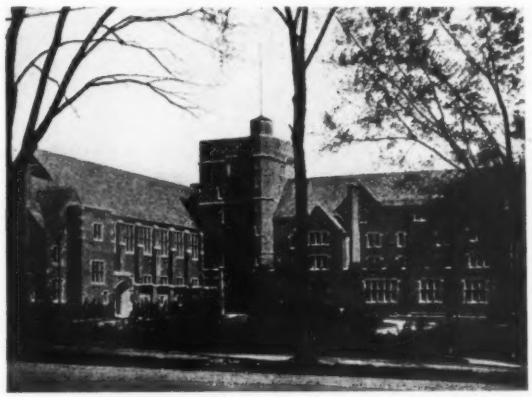
soon followed by other municipalities. If there is to be a coherency of growth, a conservation of the æsthetic possibilities of development and proper safeguards set about real-estate values there is apparently only one real and lasting remedy, the zoning or districting of cities, large and small. These facts are made apparent in the article in question.

An article on some small English buildings of the late Georgian period is practically a re-telling of details and re-illustration of similar buildings, recently appearing in the English architectural press.

The Taft School, Watertown, Conn., Bertram G. Goodhue, architect, is illustrated in this issue. The general grouping or massing is excellent, while the detail shows the delicacy that characterizes Mr. Goodhue's work.

The Second Unitarian Church in Brookline, Mass., Edwin J. Lewis, ar-

(FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL FORUM)



TAFT SCHOOL, WATERTOWN, CONN.
BERTRAM GROSVENOR GOODHUE, *ARCHITECT*

chitect (illustrated in THE AMERICAN ARCHITECT last year); the Ceramic Engineering Building at the University of Illinois, by James B. Debelka; some coun-

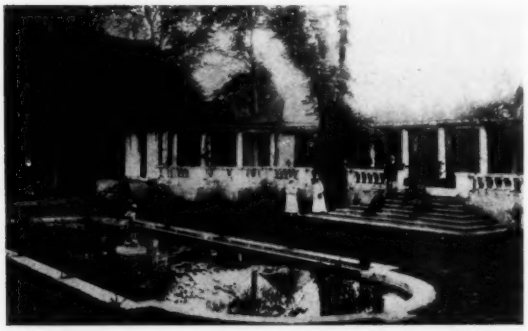
(FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL RECORD)

PART OF UNFINISHED CARRIAGE COURT
SHOWING WALL OF CLOISTER GARDEN; THE SMALL ARCHES ARE FILLED WITH FRENCH TREILLAGE

try houses by Hobart B. Upjohn, and a well designed group of houses in Salem, Mass., by William G. Rantoul, are among the illustrations shown.

The Architectural Review for January is a special issue of Workingmen's and Low Cost Houses. It contains a large amount of material of more or less originality. Of special interest, perhaps, are the competitive designs in the National

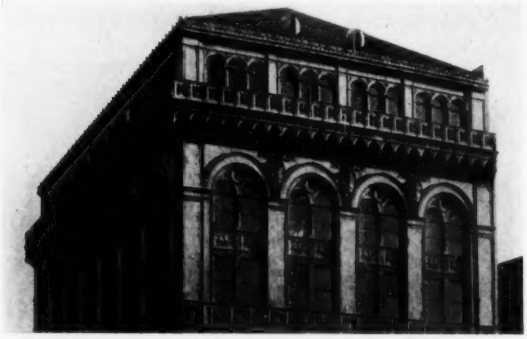
(FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL RECORD)



POND GARDEN—WOOLEY HALL, MAIDENHEAD, ENGLAND

Americanization Committee Immigrant Housing Competition. These offer considerable of suggestive value in the designing and planning of low cost houses. In an article contributed to this issue by E. T. Hartman, secretary of the Massachusetts Civic League, housing essentials are discussed in what the author believes

(FROM ARCHITECTURE)



POSTAL LIFE BUILDING, FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
YORK & SAWYER, *ARCHITECTS*

is the order of their importance; namely, health, training, education, and the development of the right attitude toward society. The presentation is able.

* * *

The leading feature of the February issue of *The Architectural Record* for February is an illustrated article on the new landscape plan for Wooley Hall, Maidenhead, England, by Thomas H. Manson.

This picturesque place is the English home of one of America's rich men. The article describes the process and the plan in the evolution of a garden whose picturesqueness is the result of careful work in landscape architecture.

The first of a series of articles on English Architectural Decoration, by Albert E. Bullock, appears in this issue and

(FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.)

TWO-TONE POSTER, 30 x 40 INCHES
DRAWN BY FRANK BRANGWYN TO AID THE BELGIAN ARCHITECTS IN ENGLAND

gives promise of much historical interest. Mr. Peter B. Wight describes some recent additions to the buildings for the University of Chicago, Max Judge contributes an English Study of the Palais de Justice, Brussels, and there is a posthumous article, An Oasis in the Bronx, by the late Montgomery Schuyler.

* * *

Some recent work by Aymar Embury II absorbs considerable space in the Feb-

ruary issue of *Architecture*. Of greater interest, perhaps, is the Postal Life Building, in New York, designed by York & Sawyer. This building is situated on one of the important corners of Fifth Avenue, and by its excellence lends dignity to its location.

A school for dancing by G. A. & H. Boehme, architects, on West 57th Street is shown by a single picture.

As indicating the decorative possibili-

(FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE A. I. A.)

"THE CARNIVAL AT MADRID, THE BATON DANCE," BY VIERGE

ties in detail and color of modern terra-cotta, this subject is of interest, although unsatisfactory in composition.

In the text, Mr. Swartwout continues the discussion of the classic orders of architecture, treating in the present article of the Doric.

* * *

Mr. William Laurel Harris' article in the February issue of *Good Furniture*, on Examples of Ancient and Modern Craftsmanship to be found in New York, will be of interest to architects.

There can be no doubt that there is a revival of interest in good craftsmanship in this country. It will not, perhaps, be an exaggeration to state that our most important artistic development during the next decade will be the work of the crafts-

(FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL FORUM)

CERAMIC ENGINEERING BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN, ILL.
JAMES B. DIBELKA, *STATE ARCHITECT*
PROF. JAMES WHITE, *SUPERVISING ARCHITECT*

man. Stimulation of effort in this direction will have the most salutary influence, and the co-operation of architects will hasten the result.

Mr. H. D. Eberlein's series on Old Spanish Furniture is continued, and Mr. R. F. Bach contributes the seventh installment of his interesting series on For-

(FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL FORUM)

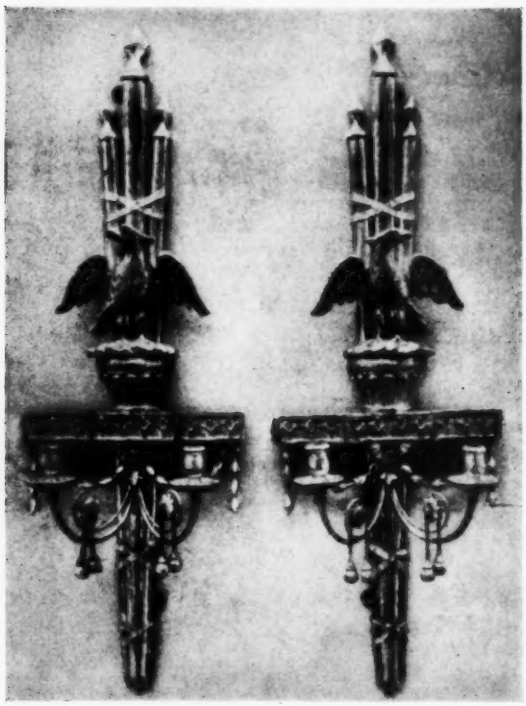
GROUP OF HOUSES, SALEM, MASS.
WILLIAM G. RANTOUL, *ARCHITECT*

eign Artists in French Furniture Design. The numerous illustrations in this issue of interior design, furniture and other accessories are up to the usual high standard.

Comment is made, and at considerable length, in the February issue of *The Journal of the American Institute of Architects* on the omnibus public buildings bill, which passed the House of Representatives on January 19th. This bill is now before the Senate and indications are that it will not be passed by that body. There is even strong possibility that it may not even be reported for discussion.

In the *Journal's* comment on the de-

(FROM GOOD FURNITURE)



EIGHTEENTH CENTURY SCONCES SHOWING THE QUALITY OF EARLY AMERICAN CRAFTSMANSHIP

Recently Acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art

bate in the House, a number of very interesting extracts from the *Congressional Record* are printed. These all indicate the somewhat hazy idea of the present congressmen concerning the duties and dignities of the practice of architecture.

In this issue of the *Journal*, Mr. Peter B. Wight makes a suggestion for a section to be included in all future State laws regulating the practice of architecture.

Other features are the experiences of a member of the Institute on the war front in France, and the continuation of a series of articles on "Architectural Draftsmen." In the latter, the present issue comments on the work of Daniel

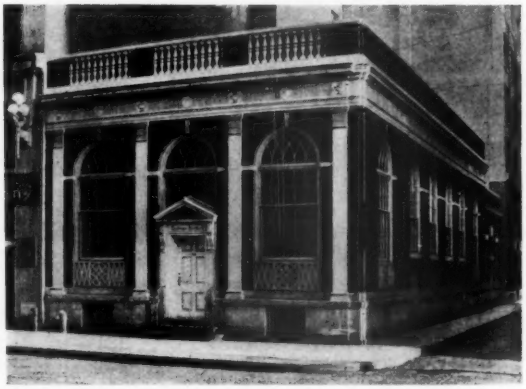
(FROM THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIO)

SELF PORTRAIT, BY THE LATE WILLIAM M. CHASE

Urrabieta Vierge. The illustrations accompanying this article are of more than usual interest, and indicate the highest measure of artistic ability.

The usual Institute notices, and other

(FROM ARCHITECTURE)



OFFICE BUILDING, FRONT STREET, NEW YORK
AYMAR EMBURY II, *ARCHITECT*

matters of interest to members, are printed, as are also the awards of December 27, 1916, of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design.

* * *

While the February issue of *The Inter-*

national Studio does not present current material of specific architectural interest, it nevertheless records and illustrates exhibitions and current happenings in the field of art in this country and Europe in the usual manner.

The Buccleuch Miniatures in the Victoria and Albert Museum are partially illustrated and an article reviews miniature painting and collections and their educational value.

A number of sketches made in the war zone by British artists are reproduced, and there is a third article on the recent Arts and Crafts exhibition at the Royal Academy.

* * *

The Western Architect, in its January issue, illustrates a number of subjects, the details of which will be found in the index to the current architectural press on another page.

A feature of this issue is the publication of some of the plans entered in a competition held by the City Club of Chicago for the development of a typical quarter section of land (160 acres) in the outskirts of Chicago. The interest in this competition lies mainly in the widely different attitudes taken by the competitors whose plans are published, toward the proposed development of this large tract, and, while purely theoretical, they present much of suggestive value.

As pendant to the illustration of the recently completed Ceramics Building at the University of Illinois, Mr. Claude Bragdon's address on the occasion of the dedication of the building is printed. It is on the Use of Ceramic Products in the Artistic Embellishment of Buildings. From both the practical and the artistic side this address is worth a careful perusal. There can be, and often is, an inartistic use of an artistic material. This danger is very ably discussed by Mr. Bragdon, who concludes with the following statements:

"Ceramics have, as regard architecture, a distinct and honorable function. This function should be recognized, taken advantage of, but never overpassed. They offer opportunities large but not limitless. They constitute one instrument of the orchestra of which the architect is the conductor, an instrument beautiful in the hands of a master, and doubly beautiful in concert and contrast with those other materials which make that music in three dimensions: architectural art."

Southern Pine Association Competition for School Building

The Southern Pine Association of New Orleans, La., recently conducted an architectural competition for the best design of a Pavilion type of school building built entirely of Southern Yellow Pine. There were three prizes and five honorable mentions. The prizes were as follows: First prize, $300; second prize, $150; third prize, $50. The competition closed Dec. 1, 1916. Over forty drawings from all parts of the United States were submitted, and some of them were notably meritorious.

The awards were made as follows:

First Prize—Nevil C. Settoon, New Orleans, La.

Second Prize—Frederick G. Walker, Chicago, Ill.

Third Prize—Clifford Evans, Birmingham, Ala.

Honorable Mentions:

George Hunt Ingraham, Boston, Mass.
William Leslie Welton, Birmingham, Ala.
Thomas M. Harlee, New Orleans, La.
Albert F. Keymar, Milwaukee, Wis.
J. B. Blair, Boston, Mass.

The Southern Pine Association sought to develop the best plan for a one-story school building, believing that there was much room for improvement in the present methods of housing school children. The advantages of the Pavilion type school building are these: saves life, spares anxiety, preserves health, saves money, assures better school work, does away with stair climbing, provides more fresh air, additions can be made easily, has a better playground and permits more variety in design.

The Pavilion type can be constructed in units, so that a small community can enlarge their building as necessity requires without losing architectural beauty or sacrificing play space. The circular

announcing the competition points out that "Fireproof schools have not always proved to be fireproof, and they most certainly are not panic-proof. Often more children are hurt in the mad rush to escape the fire than in the fire itself. Stairways are the traps where children are caught in case of fire or fire panic. The Pavilion type school building eliminates fire danger. In such a building the pupils are all on the first floor and the exits are so placed that the children can leave the building in a very few seconds. There has never been a life lost by fire in a one-story school building in the history of the United States."

As the Pavilion type is built around the lot instead of placed in the center of it the playground is all in one large block, away from the street, instead of being broken up into small, narrow strips. Part of the court can be roofed over and serve as a playground on rainy days or a pleasant place for out-door classes.

A Correction

The power plant and office building of the Philadelphia Textile Machinery Co., Messrs. Day & Zimmermann, architects and engineers, illustrated in our issue of February 21, was incorrectly titled as that of the Cincinnati Bickford Tool Co., whereas the only illustration of the latter company's buildings was the full page plate on the page just preceding that of the buildings titled in error.

Hastings' Exhibition, Columbia University

At Columbia University, in the Avery Architectural Library, is now to be seen a most interesting collection of drawings, the work of Carrere and Hastings, architects.

They demonstrate the utmost facility of drawing, fertility of design and accuracy of draftsmanship. One rarely sees even in New York so varied and uniformly excellent a collection of drawings of executed work. There are included several fine renderings by Jules Guerin.

It will be illuminating to the interested layman to observe in this exhibition the architect's mode of attack, and, above all, will be demonstrated the conscientiousness and care which are among the primary virtues of the modern designer of first rank.

The exhibition will continue indefinitely and is open to the public. The Avery Library is open from 9 a. m. to 6 p. m. and from 7 to 11 p. m., except Sundays.

Personals

Messrs. Zantzinger, Borie & Medary, architects, announce the removal of their offices to 112 South Sixteenth Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

Mr. Eugene G. Groves, architect, announces that he has removed his offices from 329 Gas and Electric Building to 222 Foster Building Denver, Col.

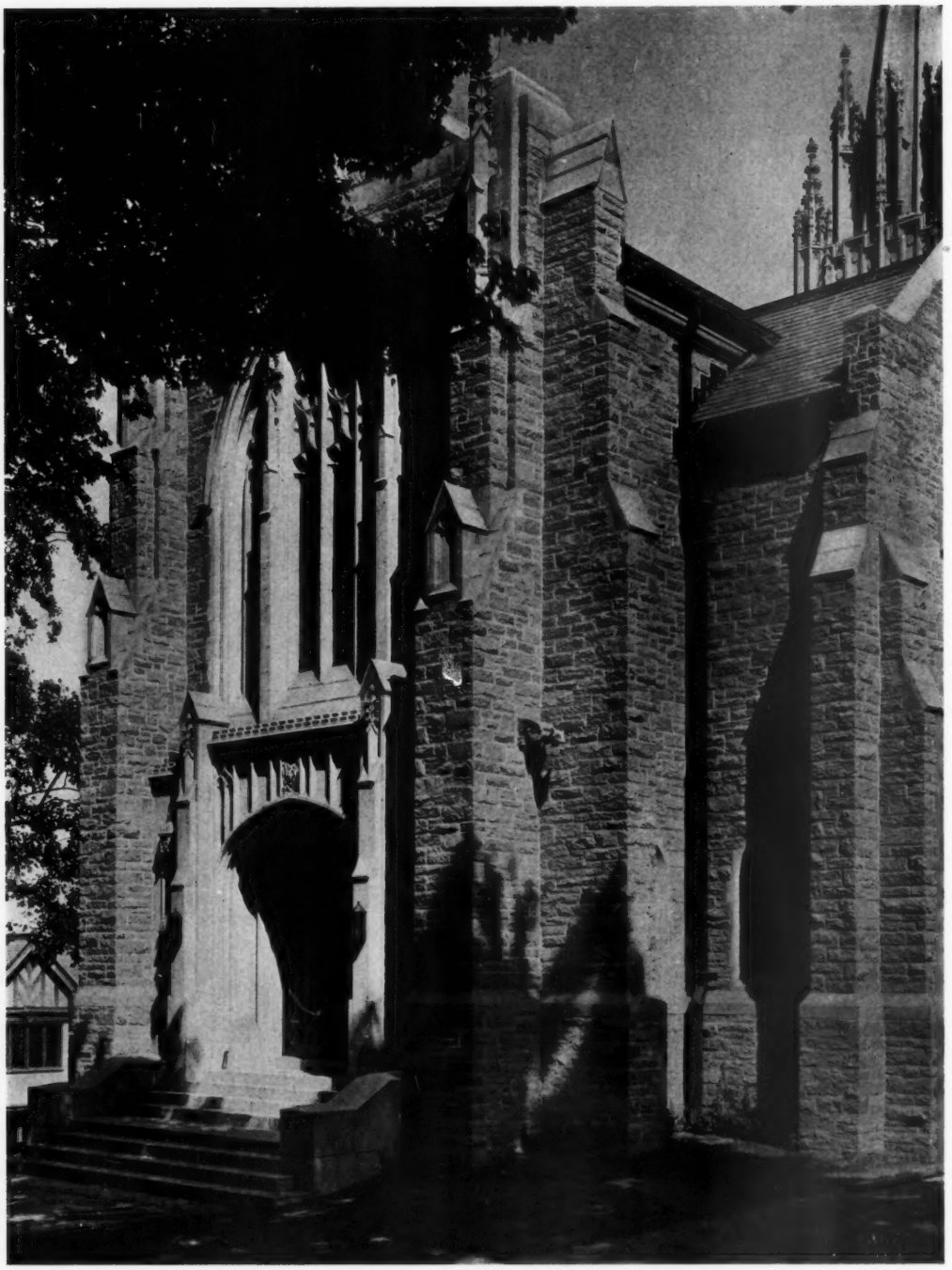
Mr. Andrew J. Thomas, architect, announces that on and after March 1, 1917, his office will be located at 137 East 45th Street, and he would be glad to receive manufacturers' samples and catalogs.

The architectural firm of Hutchison & Cutler, 312-313 Cutler Building, Rochester, N. Y., has been dissolved. Mr. Howard W. Cutler will continue the practice of his profession at the old address of the firm.

Drawing Materials

The Defiance Manufacturing Company, with offices in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago, has issued a book of some 400 pages with board covers illustrating a very complete line of drawing materials and instruments used by architects and engineers. Among the articles shown and described are transits, levels, theodolites, measuring tapes, drafting room furniture, drawing instruments, etc.

It is stated to be the aim of this company to supply the highest grade of goods which can be either manufactured in this country or imported. The catalog would seem to furnish a ready means of selecting needed supplies for the drafting room or office, and will be sent to architects or engineers upon request.



SECOND CHURCH IN NEWTON—WEST NEWTON, MASS.
MESSRS. ALLEN & COLLENS, *ARCHITECTS*